1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

As a gift to Bernice P. Bishop Museum, the people of Pukapuka generously made a complete collection of objects of material culture, excepting only the few objects which they can no longer make. A day-to-day study of the processes of manufacture was of great value in clearing up many problems of technology.

Whatever success our work achieved, therefore, is due to the enthusiasm and cooperation of our informants, in the first place, and also of the people of Pukapuka as a whole. Our early work was done entirely with the aid of interpreters. Much of Ernest Beaglehole's later formal work was done with interpreters because he did not wish to risk losing material through inability to follow crucial explanations. Informants could speak much Rarotongan but required the use of Pukapukan when discussing language and various concepts of native Pukapukan life. Our interpreters could speak easily only the Rarotongan dialect. Thus a great deal of explanation between informant and interpreters was necessary before the final English version could be presented to us. For this reason and also because many subjects can not be discussed easily through the medium of a third person, Pearl Beaglehole accepted the necessity of doing without interpreters at the earliest possible moment.

CULTURE CONTACT

Pukapuka was discovered by Commodore Byron in 1765. Between that time and the landing of the first native missionaries of the London Missionary Society in 1857, the island was probably rarely visited by Europeans, presumably because of its isolation and the poverty of natural resources. Native tradition tells of three European ships which visited Pukapuka during these years. Between 1857 and the visit of the Reverend Wyatt Gill in 1862, most of the people of the island had been converted to Christianity. Peruvian slavers twice visited the atoll about 1863 and removed about 100 men and women, only one of whom, the late high chief, Pilato, returned to Pukapuka. In 1869, Captain English of the barque *R. W. Woods* (6, p. 33) landed in Honolulu 42 natives of Danger Island.[1] The natives were unsatisfactory both as plantation laborers and as domestic servants and some time later 20 of them were sent back to Pukapuka by the schooner *Annie*, Captain Babcock. A man from Atiu named Tione, according to the Pukapukan account of this labor gang, returned with the Hawaiian party and later married a Pukapukan woman named Takale whom he had met in Hawaii.

The island was formally annexed to Great Britain in 1892 and included within the boundaries of New Zealand in 1901. The first resident agent visited the island in 1914, and since that year agents have been in residence most of the time. The majority of the people are members of the London Missionary Society church. A Seventh Day Adventist mission was started in 1919, a Roman Catholic mission about 1929. All three missions are served by native pastors.

1. [Puka puka — atoll.]

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

served by native pastors. Communication with the outside world during the past years has varied considerably, depending on the rise and fall of the price of copra. For some time a Burns Philp trading schooner has visited the island twice each year to buy copra, to trade, and to carry mail, but this service is now discontinued with the closing of Apia as port of entry for Pukapuka. A warship of the New Zealand station usually makes an annual visit to Pukapuka. There is now occasional direct communication between Pukapuka and Rarotonga, headquarters for the Cook Islands Administration.

The effect of the contact with white culture upon native Pukapukan culture has been out of all proportion to the general lack of communication between the atoll and the outside world, due to the zeal of the native London Missionary Society pastors. Customs and practices associated with the old-time religion have been wiped out; religious structures have been destroyed, and the stones of which they were constructed used to build houses and the causeway that joins old and new Yato villages. Social organization has not been much affected beyond the breaking down of the power of the chiefs and their supersession as governing authorities by an authority set up under the Cook Islands Act. Old kinship avoidances show signs of falling into disuse among the younger generations, though they are strictly followed by the older people. Traditional history and genealogies are still well remembered.

The Pukapukan language is being gradually superseded by the Rarotongan as the language of church and government. The native missionaries have all been Pukapukan or Rarotongan, trained in the Rarotongan mission schools, and the Rarotongan dialect has been the language used by missionaries in the Cook Islands. The Bible used is in the Rarotongan dialect, and today Rarotongan is taught in the school by the present missionary and spoken exclusively by the resident agent. Very old people still speak fairly pure Pukapukan among themselves; some middle-aged people follow this example but use Rarotongan for church and state business; others tend to speak Rarotongan exclusively. Younger people who have passed through school tend to speak Rarotongan for all purposes and often find old Pukapukan speech or idiom difficult to understand. The old chants are remembered in Pukapukan, though they contain many archaic words which even those with a full and ready knowledge of Pukapukan can not understand. We insisted on informant's using the Pukapukan dialect as far as possible in their communications with us, as this was the only way to compile a vocabulary of the dialect; many were the arguments over the admission of various words to our lists of Pukapukan words.

The morality of the community has of course been vitally affected by missionary influence. As a result there is a wide breach between the moral theory on which the community is supposed to operate and the actual code of conduct followed by the majority. The life of the young people in its

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I:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

more personal aspects particularly is frowned upon by elders in open but tacitly approved in fact. In contact with white people the Pukapukans always speak and act as if they heartily believed and followed the missionary code. It took us many months to persuade them that we did not care to pass judgement upon what they thought and did but that what really interested us was to find out what these acts and thoughts were. As informants gained confidence in us, they dropped their usual attitude of "being on their best behavior" when we were present and were much more natural and free. This attitude of confidence was sufficient for us to gain insight into some of the more implicit phases of Pukapukan life, but even at the end of our stay we were baffled in our attempts to penetrate far below the surface. The cultural veneer of mid-Victorian morality is sufficiently deep to withstand any penetration save that based on long years of patient probing.

White contact has affected least of all the economic life and the manufacture of native articles. Though many Pukapukans today live in coral lime houses in the permanent villages, native houses still predominate, especially in the copra-making villages. The people wear European clothes; the women wear dresses, the men trousers and, when not working, shirts as well. The use of native clothing had almost disappeared by 1934. Because there has been little money available to buy fresh clothes some women now eke out the life of old rags by wearing coconut-leaf kilts over these during working hours. Boys under 12 or 13 years of age go naked for the most part, reserving pants and shirts for school and church wear. Girls wear dresses from the tenderest age onward. Presumably this tendency would be reversed if the first missionaries had been women.

Every household is supplied with knives, usually a cooking pot, tins as drinking utensils, and mosquito nets. Fishermen commonly use iron fishhooks but they still largely retain the use of native fishlines. Native plank canoes, lashed with sennit, are in common use, the several flat-bottomed European boats being used only for transport of copra and cargo over the reef. Beyond these obvious changes, economic life functions today largely according to old patterns. The few items that could not be made for the Bishop Museum collection consisted mainly of plaited garments apparently infrequently worn in the old days.

LIMITATIONS OF MATERIAL

Data on the more personal and implicit aspects of the culture were obtained from special informants with whom we had built up a confidential friendship, usually without the medium of an interpreter. The material on formal social life, save where it relates to the old-time governing authorities, to the powers of the chiefs and elders, or to the general tapus surrounding the chiefs, is reasonably reliable. Questioning of informants has been sup-

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

MATERIAL CULTURE

HOUSES

House Styles

341 797 343 A wide variety of house styles is found in Pukapuka today. In the permanent villages, the dwelling houses are either of coral lime roofed with pandanus thatch, or of a type introduced from Rarotonga by the missionaries, with slat walls reaching to the roof and often with a wide veranda. Along with these modern houses are found old style dwelling houses and cook houses. Small, square, slat-walled houses which stand close to each dwelling house in the permanent villages were evidently orginally built under missionary impetus to serve as bath houses. Some of these bath houses are used for their assumed purpose, but the majority, after their novelty wore off, were converted into storehouses for fishing gear. Loto village at one time set up a row of wooden structures on coral lime foundations in the water a few feet from the lagoon beach. These serve as privies; many of them are in sad need of repair.

In the copra villages, most dwelling and cook houses are built in an old Pukapukan style. One house in particular, a watch house at the place Matala in Uta, has acquired undue prominence in the literature because of its age. Built about three generations ago at the time of first missionary contact, it is a well-authenticated example of one style of Pukapukan house building.

SIMPLE RIDGEPOST HOUSE

341 335 The *uale toimaha* (fig.8,*a*) is a small, low house, usually erected on exposed outer beaches to serve as a cook house, sometimes as a sleep house. The framework consists of two ridgeposts (*pou tu*), which support a single ridgepole (*tau matua*). In one subtype, rafters (*wati poto*) run from the ridgepole to the ground. In the other subtype, two wall posts (*pou*) on each side support wall plates (*kaukau matua*). Rafters run down from the ridgepole to rest on the wall plates. There are no thatch rafters; the thatch of coconut roof sheets is laid directly against the rafters, in such a manner that the midrib bases of the roof sheets function as thatch purlins. Lashings are of sennit or, as in a rough house examined, of dried *pulaka* stalks. Smaller houses of this type have one ridgepole only, but more substantial houses have a second ridgepole (*tau lua*), which is laid in the crossings of the rafters (fig.8,*a*). The ridgepole roof sheet is securely fastened to the framework by pegs (*puhi*) that are pushed through the sheets and between the two ridgepoles.

A roof extension (*kaumata*) is often added to the exposed end of these

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5) 1938 Pukapukans

were shorter than those made of sennit and were therefore worn more as ornaments than as protective clothing.

Both the malo of sennit and the malo of pandanus are greatly valued today in terms of sentiment and scarcity. No longer being made, they are the greatest heirloom that a man can hand on to his son. Sennit malo C8146 was procured from a childless man who felt he had no further use for it. During the confessional held as a last desperate attempt to save the life of an only male child, the sennit malo that the child would inherit was hung from the house tiebeams as if its highly charged sentimental value might help the child to hold onto life (p. 338).

Informants suggested that the hands of contemporary Pukapukans are different from those of ancient Pukapukans and that therefore the art of making the very tight five-ply braid of the sennit malo has been lost. But, as both malos might be classed by missionaries as heathen garments, there is no longer sufficient incentive in the culture to take the trouble to make them.

The art of making the poncho-like garment (*la kupenga*) worn by men above the pandanus malo has been lost, but from informant's description it seems that it is plaited of fine strips of *kie* pandanus material. Three or four elements were plaited as a single element (*langa tolu* or *langa ua*). The garment was rectangular, falling to the waist at front and back. The neck hole was either square or roughly V-shaped. Hanging ends were fringed with strips of *kie*, and the garment was fastened with strings of *wulo* cord (*matai wulo*) on either side, one pair of strings under the arms, another pair at the waist. Informants felt that there was no status associated with the wearing of this garment, but it was worn on festive or ceremonial occasions by anyone whose wife or relative had acquired the technique of plaiting it from a dream in which familiars came from the Underworld to teach it. The following lines of an old chant were quoted to prove the antiquity of the garment:

Walakawua ki te la kupenga	Clothed in the *la kupenga*
Tuputupa a Yiva angaoti	Made as in Yiva (legendary land) certainly,
Yongia ona wakaevevenga.	Smelled its fringe.

Informants said that a Pukapukan man returned from the land of Yiva where the art of making *la kupenga* was also known. He was wearing a foreign-made *la kupenga* when he landed. The people went to greet him and some pressed the fringe of the garment to their noses. This fringe had the smell of a foreign land or of a foreign people. It may be inferred perhaps that the garment was introduced into Pukapuka from the land of Yiva and never became a common article of wear, its use dying out rapidly when the Pukapukans acquired European garments.

Corresponding to the *la kupenga* worn by men was a sort of short cape (*yeu*) worn by women. The art of making the *yeu* has been lost today.

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

Stone Seats

Formerly a man might make on the outer beach a stone seat (*tokewe-langi*) on which to rest in the cool of the evening, eat the evening meal, and sleep. Informants stated that the two Pukapukan voyagers, Tonu and Taea, saw stone seats on the island of Wakalava and introduced the idea on their return to Pukapuka.

There was apparently much latitude in the way these stone seats were built. Some were built with a stone seat, stone back rest, and a slab at either side for an arm rest; others were made by hollowing out a shallow depression in the sand and facing the bottom and sides of the depression with coral slabs. The sides were inclined at an angle of about 10 to 15 degrees to the bottom; the bottom was at least 6 feet long, and 3 feet wide, wider if a man planned to take wife or sweetheart to sit with him. Other seats were made according to fancy. Each seat was named after its owner and served as a symbol of his prestige. No seats are used today, most of the stones having been used for oven stones: missionary teaching does not countenance the use of stone seats on lonely outer beaches. Macgregor's statement (20, p. 25) that the idea of these seats was brought to Pukapuka by the people of Yayake and that they were used by priests as religious structures for the offering of turtle and fish to the gods received no support from informants who were strongly of the opinion that the seats were places of rest and recreation only.

The stone seat on the southeastern outer beach of Motu Ko, which tradition states was used by the bird man Wate-manava-ewi, is now in ruins. The remains of other seats lie close by. The outer beach has been elevated at this place by the piling up of coral gravel through wave action and the ruins of the seats are situated well under the lee of the raised beach. To have been useful as cool resting sites, the seats must have been built before this beach was elevated. The ruins consist of fragments of stone 1 to 2 feet square. The original stone seat, suggested informants, has been gone for many generations, washed away by high seas. A later generation built on the same site, but these seats were mostly destroyed by the seas; those that remained were pulled down under missionary influence.

Walls

Stone walls marking the boundaries of the reserves (p. 35) have now almost disappeared, but remnants of the wall round Uta are to be seen at the place Matala. The wall consists of large slabs of coral conglomerate set on edge. The old gate (*fa*) through this wall still remains. It consists of a gap about 2 feet wide marked on either side by a stone reputed to have been carried there by the warrior Kupolu. One stone is 7 feet wide, 8 inches thick, and 4 feet 8 inches above ground; the other is 7 feet 8 inches wide, 22 inches thick and 4 feet 4 inches above ground. Each stone is set about 3 feet in the ground. The size of the stones, if typical of all the stones forming the wall, indicates the great labor of building the wall.

House Foundations

The use of small coral slabs set on edge to form the boundary of the house platform and the use of coral pebbles to form the house floor is described on page 116.

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

No other sites visited revealed stones. Informants stated that during early missionary days, the stones were removed to build a causeway across the talo swamp, to make walls for stone houses, and to burn for lime, which, mixed with sand, provided the mortar for the new stone houses.

The pattern of low-walled, oval or circular religious enclosures with a central stone representation of a god is an unusual development in Polynesia and recalls the structures that Gill described for Niutao in the Ellice Islands which he visited in 1872. Gill mentions that the stone representative of the god Tangaloa was a plain upright slab. The religious structure adjoined the burial ground (a common Pukapukan pattern) and consisted of "an oval low enclosure, composed of flat stones, some higher than others, each representing a distinct divinity, so that the sacred men standing inside the enclosure—the people of course outside—could worship all the gods at once" (12,p.14). It is unfortunate for comparative study that Gill did not particularize these religious enclosures in more detail.

Commemorative stones, marking the shrine of an ancestor god on a sacred clearing (*yionga*), consisted of a single upright stone set in the ground, or else several stones set on edge to form a rectangular structure two or more feet square, the enclosure being filled in with coral gravel. This type of commemorative shrine was similar to the seats (*pots*) of the priests in the god house (*uale atua*) and also to the low seat that was set before the stone representative of the god on the religious structure.

Graves

Formerly each cemetery was surrounded by a low, rectangular wall (*paepae*) of coral stones which demarcated the area set aside by the people of a lineage as their burial place. The area varied in size according to the numerical size of the lineage. Most of these walls have fallen into decay, but are observable on some cemeteries removed from the village. The stones are about 3 inches above ground and are undressed coral of different lengths and thicknesses.

Outside these walls are observable the stone *paepae* that marked the foundations of old houses of mourning (*uale matenga*). On one foundation are still seen the holes into which the wall posts of the house fitted; on another, rotting wooden posts from the dismantled house are lying on the foundation.

Within each cemetery, the graves are of three types: the modern Christian, enclosed, boxlike grave; the rectangular, open grave accorded formerly to people of rank; and the two-stone grave accorded formerly to commoners (pl.2,*B*).

Former custom was to bury with head to the east, feet to the west. Graves of chiefs (*alihi uale* and *tuai alihi*) were marked by eight stones—two at the head, two at

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

618 616 613 297 621 578 226

period, organization was in terms of either *utua* or *yolongo* units. Village membership is the rule for team organization today, so that Loto village contests with Ngake and with Yato villages. It is probable that missionary effort hastened this change. Informants believed, however, that groupings of maternal or paternal units are superior to the village grouping. The following example was given: suppose there is a man who was born in Ngake, but who affiliates and resides (*vilo*) in Yato. In an inter-village contest he fishes for Yato. He hooks a fish. If he pulls it into his canoe, his Ngake friends are angry with him for catching a fish for a rival village, and thus helping to defeat the village of his birth. If he lets the fish escape, his Yato friends are angry with him for remembering the village of his birth to the exclusion of his adopted village. Hence the man is at the mercy of conflicting loyalties, and he antagonizes friends whichever way he acts. The old maternal or paternal organization, therefore, was superior to the present village division.

612 621 618 574

Food divisions following fishing contests and other games are always in terms of either maternal or paternal organization. They are arranged in advance by village elders and food distributors. Before the division of food for a fishing contest (*malama*), the food dividers asked me how I wished the food to be divided. As I left the responsibility to them, they decided to make the division on the paternal (*yolongo*) principle. The food was first divided into three equal piles for the villages; then each pile was divided among the paternal lineages of each village.

Food divisions at marriage and birth feasts were formerly always in terms of maternal units. This is still common today, though division is sometimes made among the actual household groups concerned in the marriage. Food divisions of reserve lands produce are always in terms of village division. This follows the rule that control of reserves and work thereon is always maintained by village groupings.

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It is a permissible speculation to consider Pukapukan history as a struggle for dominance between these three social groupings, principally however, between the maternal and paternal lineages. At the present time, the paternal lineage is much more important in social organization than the maternal grouping. The maternal sub-lineages still influence marriage and control land, but they share these functions with the paternal lineages and with the villages. The smaller maternal lineages seem to be dying out, or at least to be more and more subsumed by the moiety groupings. Dwindling numbers could easily be remedied by recourse to adoption, but maternal lineage adoption is rare, for the reason that few wish to take the trouble to keep the maternal lineages alive. The fact that the maternal lineage memberships of the principal characters in legends and stories are not remembered suggests that even in an immediate past those groupings were not so important as the paternal groupings. At the present time, the paternal lineage is strong in its control of wealth, rank, inheritance, and succession. Both paternal and maternal lineages control food divisions and previously controlled organization for contests.

114 171 611 M8

Kennedy (19,p.297), speaking of Vaitupuan social structure, especially with reference to the exchange of presents at marriage and birth, sees definite evidence "of dual organization and matrilineal descent". The maternal lineage in Pukapuka also functions as a controlling unit at birth and marriage. Kennedy believes that in respect to dual organization, Vaitupu "was at a

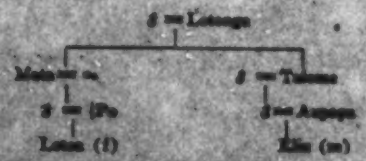
1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

601 cousin-in-avoidance—is the man's *tiamutu*. The father calls the child my *tiamutu*; the child calls the father my *matua*. No such term would be applied to the child of a brother adopted by the brother's sister, nor to a grandchild adopted by grandparents.

601 603 114 778 Hutchin (18) is the authority for the statement that *inakava* (*sic*) is the term applied to the daughter of a sister. What this means is not clear. The word *yinakava* is archaic and is found only in old chants. It is applied to anything or anybody which is tapu. Hence the god house on a double canoe or a sacred structure is *yinakava*. Similarly one who stands in the relationship of cousin-in-avoidance to the speaker is *yinakava* to the speaker. A man might call his cousin-in-avoidance my *yinakava*, but only under stress of emotion as in mourning ceremonies; in a love chant one's cousin-in-avoidance may be addressed, by poetic metaphor, as *yinakava*.

606 602 [m] Avoidance relations hold between those who are related to each other as *tainga wakaua* or as *wale atua*, and differ in intensity for the two types of relationship. The *wale atua* relationship involved more complete avoidance. But what constituted the difference between the two relationships is hard to distinguish at this date, as both have largely disappeared under missionary influence. Groups of informants were decidedly unclear on the subject, some giving as *wale atua*, for instance, the names of people who did not themselves recognise their *wale atua* relationship to the others. Pau gave the clearest definition of both terms:

> First cousins of opposite sex, whether cross or parallel, stand to each other in the relationship of *tainga wakaua*. In the next generation, children of opposite sex of these *tainga wakaua* are *wale atua* to each other. In the next generation children of opposite sex of *wale atua* are also *wale atua*, and so on, theoretically as long as the common bond of descent is remembered. Children of the same sex of *tainga wakaua* are *taina* to each other. Children of these *taina*, as also children of *taina*, themselves the children of brother and sister, if of opposite sex, are *wale atua* to each other. Similarly, children of the same sex, of *wale atua* are *taina* to each other, but children of opposite sex, of these *taina*, are *wale atua*, because, in both cases, the remembered ancestors two generations back were either *wale atua* or *tainga wakaua* to each other. This is illustrated in the genealogy:



> Mata and Tekena are brother and sister. Their children, cross cousins of the same sex, are *taina* to each other. The children of these *taina*, Lotea and Elia, are *wale atua* because they are related through *taina*, first cousins of the same sex, who again are descended from blood brother and sister. Children of Elia and Lotea, of the opposite sex, are *wale atua* to each other.

2: Macgregor E-2 (1933) 1935 Pukapukans
834, 797, 836

[Information in this source which is either inadequate, incorrect or duplication has only been filed in category 116: for sexual restrictions and effects of missionary teaching, see pp. 20-21.]

2:Macgregor E-2 (1933) 1935 Pukapukans

of copra are exported. Nine varieties of taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) grow on the island; *talo Borabora, talo maoraora, talo koli, talo uakene, talo nenengu, talo kula, talo pongi, talo taraki, talo 'enga'enga. Puraka* (*Cyrtosperma chamissonis*), a coarse tuber of the taro family with enormous heart-shaped leaves, is grown in the wet pits. This plant is said to have been introduced from the Cook Islands. Bananas (*wuti*), papayas, limes, and sugar cane grow on the island, but because of the poor soil the production is slight and contributes very little to the food supply. Hutchin (6, p. 173) states that sweet potatoes (*kumala*) and arrowroot were formerly grown.

Fish forms the chief flesh diet. Turtles are caught during the mating season when they are off the reefs and the females come ashore to lay their eggs in the sand. Pigs and chickens are kept on the island but are eaten only on occasions of celebrating some event.

Although Pukapuka was sighted by a European ship as early as 1765, it has enjoyed an existence remarkably free from intercourse with Europeans because of its isolation and its lack of natural resources. Captain Byron discovered the island on June 21, 1765, and named it "Danger Island" because of its treacherous submerged reefs and rapid currents. Lovett (8, p. 372) states that a native missionary teacher was on the island in 1857 and had proselytized most of the natives before the arrival of Reverend W. W. Gill, the first European missionary, in 1862. During the decade 1860-70 Peruvian slavers raided the island for laborers to carry to South America. In two visits they took 150 men and women, none of whom ever returned to their home (11).

The island was formally annexed by Great Britain in 1892. In 1901, by an Imperial Order in Council, Great Britain extended the boundaries of New Zealand to include the Cook Islands, Tongareva, Manihiki, Rakahanga, Palmerston, Pukapuka, and Niue. Pukapuka is now governed by the Cook Islands Administration. At present Mr. Geoffrey Henry, Resident Agent, directs the government, and with Mrs. Henry conducts the island school and cares for the health and sanitation. Most of the population belongs to the London Missionary Society Protestant church, which is under the direction of a native pastor. In 1919 Mr. Wicks, of the Seventh Day Adventist sect, arrived at the island and directed the building of a church during his temporary residence. A small group still retain their membership in this church. No European missionaries live on the island today.